

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-43 (Cancelled)

Claim 44 (New): An isolated coryneform bacterium, which expresses a decreased amount of the product of the *mdhA* gene (malate dehydrogenase) compared to the unmodified starting strain.

Claim 45 (New): The isolated coryneform bacterium of Claim 44, wherein the *mdhA* gene has been eliminated.

Claim 46 (New): The isolated coryneform bacterium of Claim 44, wherein the *mdhA* gene has been inactivated.

Claim 47 (New): The isolated coryneform bacterium of Claim 44, wherein the *mdhA* gene has been attenuated by modification of at least one repressor gene, activator gene, operator, promoter, attenuator, ribosome binding site, start codon, start codon, or other signal structure.

Claim 48 (New): The isolated coryneform bacterium of Claim 44, wherein the *mdhA* gene has been attenuated by a modification which reduces the enzyme activity of the *mdhA* gene product.

Claim 49 (New): The isolated coryneform bacterium of Claim 44, which is of the genus *Corynebacterium* or *Brevibacterium*.

Claim 50 (New): The isolated coryneform bacterium of Claim 44, which is selected from the group consisting of *Corynebacterium glutamicum*, *Corynebacterium acetoglutamicum*, *Corynebacterium acetoacidophilum*, *Corynebacterium melassecola*, *Corynebacterium thermoaminogenes*, *Brevibacterium flavum*, *Brevibacterium lactofermentum*, and *Brevibacterium divaricatum*.

Claim 51 (New): The isolated coryneform bacterium of Claim 44 which comprises pEMmdhAint.

Claim 52 (New): A process for making an L-amino acid comprising:

- a) culturing the bacterium of Claim 44 in a medium suitable for the production of said L-amino acid by fermentation, and
- b) recovering said L-amino acid from the culture medium or from the bacterial cells.

Claim 53 (New): The process of Claim 52, wherein said amino acid is L-lysine.

Claim 54 (New): The process of Claim 52, wherein said amino acid is L-glutamate.

Claim 55 (New): The process of Claim 52, wherein in said bacterium the *mdhA* gene has been eliminated or inactivated

Claim 56 (New): The process of Claim 52, wherein in said bacterium the *mdhA* gene has been attenuated by modification of at least one repressor gene, activator gene, operator, promoter, attenuator, ribosome binding site, start codon, start codon, or other signal structure.

Claim 57 (New): The process of Claim 52, wherein in said bacterium the *mdhA* gene has been attenuated by a modification which reduces the enzyme activity of the *mdhA* gene product.

Claim 58 (New): The process of Claim 52, wherein said bacterium is at least one selected from the group consisting of *Corynebacterium glutamicum*, *Corynebacterium acetoglutamicum*,, *Corynebacterium acetoacidophilum*, *Corynebacterium melassecola*, *Corynebacterium thermoaminogenes*, *Brevibacterium flavum*, *Brevibacterium lactofermentum*, and *Brevibacterium divaricatum*.

Claim 59 (New): The process of Claim 49, wherein said bacterium is at least one selected from the group consisting of *Corynebacterium glutamicum*, *Corynebacterium acetoglutamicum*,, *Corynebacterium acetoacidophilum*, *Corynebacterium melassecola*, *Corynebacterium thermoaminogenes*, *Brevibacterium flavum*, *Brevibacterium lactofermentum*, and *Brevibacterium divaricatum*.

Claim 60 (New): The process of Claim 49, wherein said bacterium further comprise at least one gene whose expression is enhanced (compared to an unmodified starting strain) selected from the group consisting of:

- the *dapA* gene which codes for dihydrodipicolinate synthase,
- the *eno* gene which codes for enolase,
- the *zwf* gene which codes for the *zwf* gene product,
- the *pyc* gene which codes for pyruvate carboxylase, and
- the *lysE* gene which codes for lysine export.

Claim 61 (New): The process of Claim 49, wherein said bacterium further comprises at least one gene whose expression is attenuated (compared to an unmodified starting strain) selected from the group consisting of:

- the *pck* gene which codes for phosphoenol pyruvate carboxykinase,
- the *pgi* gene which codes for glucose 6-phosphate isomerase, and
- the *poxB* gene which codes for pyruvate oxidase.

Claim 62 (New): The process of Claim 49, which is a batch process.

Claim 63 (New): The process of Claim 49, which is a fed batch or repeated fed batch process.

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Preliminary Amendment

Claim 64 (New): The process of Claim 49, which is a continuous process.